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### From the Dean



2022 Donald J. Weidner Summer for Undergraduates Program students in the Senate chambers at the Florida Capitol

Our 2022 Donald J. Weidner Summer for Undergraduates Program is underway, and it has been wonderful to have many talented, smart undergraduates on campus again after having to deliver the program virtually due to COVID for the past two years. With one week left in the 2022 program, students have already toured the Florida Capitol, met with and received advice from many influential, engaged FSU Law alumni—including Judge Nina Ashenafi-Richardson ('91) and program benefactor Wayne Hogan ('72), attended oral arguments at the Florida Supreme Court, participated in Legal Writing, Criminal Procedure, and Lawyers as Leaders law classes, and learned about various components of the law school admissions process. Before the program ends on June 24, students will also present their own oral arguments and attend a special premiere screening of Netflix's CIVIL, a documentary about FSU Law alumnus Ben Crump ('95). During their visit to the Florida Supreme Court, students also had a private meet and greet with alum Justice Ricky Polston ('87). Although the program is generously supported by Wayne, increased costs associated with hosting it put the program size at risk, thereby lessening our potential reach and impact. Additional private financial support will allow us to continue delivering the award-winning program to more students and provide robust programming for a richer, more valuable experience. If you would like to help us develop the next generation of lawyers, you can [contribute to the program online](#). Many thanks to those who choose to support this program, including this year's sponsors: Akerman, Nelson Mullins, Amelia Rea Maguire ('86), and Patrick Martin ('93). Support from alumni and friends is allowing us to continue to lead the nation in pipeline diversity programs and to provide robust programming for years to come.

*Erin O'Connor*  
Dean Erin O'Connor

### Faculty Profile: Afroditi Giovanopoulou

Professor Afroditi Giovanopoulou is joining FSU Law as an assistant professor in the fall. Professor Giovanopoulou's research lies at the intersection of law and history, with a dual focus on the history of American legal thought and on the legal history of international politics. She studies the historical, political, and jurisprudential interconnections between public and private law, as well as the ways in which legal doctrine, practice, and theory have structured the rise of the United States in the world. She holds an S.J.D. (Doctorate in Law) from Harvard Law School, an M.Phil. and M.A. in history from Columbia University, and an LL.B. and LL.M. from the Aristotle University Law School, in Thessaloniki, Greece. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in international and global history at Columbia University. In the context of her studies at Harvard and Columbia, Professor Giovanopoulou gained teaching experience in both law and history, and received a Certificate of Distinction in Teaching at Harvard College and an International Fellowship in the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University. Professor Giovanopoulou will teach Public International Law, American Legal History, Jurisprudence, and Foreign Relations Law.



*"I am excited to be joining the law faculty at FSU with its strong tradition in scholarly excellence and vibrant student body, and I look forward to contributing to the law school's intellectual community to the best of my abilities."*

### Alum Profile: Joseph M. Percopo ('09)

**Joseph M. Percopo** has joined the Orlando office of Dean Mead, where he practices in the firm's estate planning department and works with a variety of clients spanning from young couples who are beginning the estate planning process to families who are well-versed in wealth management and preservation. Percopo assists clients in matters including estate and succession planning, probate and trust administration, tax law, and corporate law. Before joining Dean Mead, he was a shareholder at Mateer Harbert and an associate at Giles & Robinson. Percopo has published articles on estate planning in multiple publications, including The Florida Bar Real Property, Probate & Trust Law Section's ActionLine, The Florida Bar Journal, and the Orange County Bar Association's Briefs. He has served on the executive council of the Real Property, Probate and Trust Law Section, is first vice president of the Central Florida Estate Planning Council, and has served in various Orange County Bar Association leadership roles. In addition to earning his law degree from FSU, Percopo earned an LL.M. in Taxation from the University of Florida, where he was a graduate editor of the *Florida Tax Review*.



*"My Dean Mead estate planning practice supports me with the firm's vast experience and strong culture in wholly backing up my long custom of showing meticulous, tailored, and genuine care to those who are beginning, updating, or wrapping up the essential process of succession."*

### Celebrating 2022 Grad Peyton Smith

Recent FSU Law graduate Peyton Smith has accepted a postgraduate position as a federal law clerk with the U.S. Department of Justice Honors Program! She will be working on asylum cases with the Executive Office of Immigration Review in Harlingen, Texas. During law school, Smith performed more than 900 hours of work with the Public Interest Law Center, working with the Human Trafficking and Exploitation Law Project, the Children in Prison Project, the Children's Advocacy Clinic, and the Immigration and Farmworker Clinic. She attended and later coordinated FSU Law's Alternative Spring Break Program, in which students visit Apopka, Florida, to work with a farmworker community. Smith was also a staff editor for the *Florida State University Law Review*, a brief writer on the Moot Court Team, president of the Advocates for Immigrant and Refugee Rights student organization, and student chair of the Big Bend Coalition Against Human Trafficking and FSU Law's Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee. Additionally, Smith received the Outstanding Clinical Student Advocate Award from the Clinical Legal Education Association, and she was awarded a Public Interest Scholarship Award and the Henry Buchanan Foundation Scholarship. Smith received book awards in her Civil Procedure, Postconviction Remedies, Professional Responsibility, and Immigration Law classes, and she graduated from FSU Law with highest honors. Congratulations to Peyton Smith on her graduation and many achievements! We wish her all the best in her new role and look forward to celebrating her future accomplishments.



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